

Somerville Planning Board**July 14, 2008**

The Commission for Persons with Disabilities has become aware of a development being planned by Park Street Housing Associates, LLC at 44 Park Street; Ward 2. This project will consist of 89 units to be retro fitted for accessibility and offered to elderly and disabled tenants. After the construction 25% of the units will be designed readily accessible for the disabled, with the remainder being designed with retro fittings.

The need for this type of housing is long overdue, at present if an individual in housing becomes disabled, they have to wait until an accessible unit becomes available. This can be harmful and frustrating to a person who has always had the ability to be self reliant and capable of the freedom to take part in an active life. Becoming disabled is a major adjustment to have to be undertaken, a delay in accessibility can often lead to a person becoming incapable of maintaining whatever physical ability they have managed to keep, it can also result in a loss of dignity. As these units will be retro fitted for accessibility, it would mean the person would not have to be relocated to an unfamiliar dwelling, and the amount of time to refit the unit for accessibility is greatly shortened, possibly within a week.

The City of Somerville has 12 complexes reserved for low income of these 10 are offered to elderly and young disabled, none however are retro fitted units with the convenience of becoming accessible to the tenant without a major undertaking of changes, making it unsafe for the tenant to remain during this process. We feel this can only benefit the city in making more unit's available in housing complexes for those who qualify for the housing, but are placed on a list stemming from the large demand for; low income housing.

Somerville Commission Members

Kellyann Binari, Chair
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Jesse Kane
Theresa Bairo
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Fred Caruso